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BULL ISLAND, ONCE PIRATE
HAUNT, MADE BIRD REFUGE

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Bull Island near Charleston, S. C., has been bought by the U. S. Biological Survey for a bird refuge. The island is part of a land-and-water tract of about 7,700 acres which has been added to the 55,000-acre Cape Romain Migratory Bird Refuge in South Carolina. The new purchase brings the water frontage of Cape Romain Refuge to about 25 miles.

Except as a haven for wildlife, for which it is well adapted, Bull Island has had an unprofitable history over 250 years. In colonial days it was famous as a pirate haunt. During the Revolution it was raided by the British, who made off with the cattle and 6 negro slaves belonging to a planter. It was repeatedly a failure as a cotton plantation and then became a timber reserve.

A wooded hill 10 miles long and 4 miles wide on an average, the island is some 18 miles northeast of the port of Charleston. The deep Atlantic lies off its outer shore. The inner shore overlooks a waste of marsh grasses and tidal currents out of which, after some miles, the solid farming land of Charleston County emerges. It was on Bull Island that the sailing vessel "Carolina" landed the first English settlers of the Carolinas, on March 15, 1670.

As far back as colonial days chroniclers remarked upon, and attempted to classify, the flocks of wild fowl which frequented the fresh-water ponds that dotted Bull Island even then. In 1935, after a lapse of hundreds of years, an agent of the

Biological Survey, recommending the purchase of the property by the Government for the uses of wildlife, noted that the center of the island is still a primeval forest where a great variety of birds can be found throughout the year.

Some of the most frequent visitors to the refuge are the great blue heron, the American egret, the snowy heron, the green heron, the Louisiana heron, the black-crowned night heron, the long-billed and Hudsonian curlews, the laughing and the ring-billed gulls, plovers of many species, the oyster catcher, the brown pelican, the royal tern. Besides these and other birds which frequent the area, Bull Island is a haven for ducks of many species, wild turkey, shore birds, deer, and wild hogs. Canvasbacks are found here in considerable numbers, this being probably their southern flight limit in large flocks, on the Atlantic coast.

Among the hundreds of thousands of acres of submarginal land recently taken over in various parts of the country by the Biological Survey as nesting and feeding grounds for wildlife, Bull Island stands out as an area in which animals are still abundant. Most of the newly acquired areas have been partially or wholly deserted by birds and four-footed game and must be restored as havens.

Measures to maintain the attractions to wildlife on the island and to facilitate its administration as a sanctuary are now being carried out by the Survey. Sand ridges on the outer shore of Bull Island will be rebuilt. Fresh-water ponds on the island, where aquatic vegetation is the chief attraction to the migratory bird population, will be newly dyked and impounded. Some new aquatic plants which have been established elsewhere as a natural duck-food will be imported and sown. Radio telephones are contemplated as a connection between Bull Island and the refuge headquarters on the mainland 10 miles away.

General improvements being made on the entire Cape Romain Refuge include new docks projected both on Bull Island and on the mainland, and a garage and a caretaker's cabin. Boat service will tie isolated portions of the huge refuge together.

Labor for the work will be furnished from a C.C.C. Camp on the Wambaw Forest Reserve, S. C., through the cooperation of the U. S. Forest Service. The cooperation of U. S. Army engineers has also been promised for channeling and dyking on the tidal flats and on Bull Island and adjacent lands.